

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5 are pending in the present application. Claims 6-8 are withdrawn from consideration. Claim 9 is herein canceled.

Applicants' Response to the Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hidaka in view of Erstad (US Pat. No. 6,307,237). Applicants have cancelled claim 9 herein. Wherefore, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot.


In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP


Michael J. Caridi
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 56,171
Telephone: (202) 822-1100
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

MJC/mra